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ABSTRACT

This report is based on a questionnaire, on the subject of education in moral values, sent to all of the school superintendents of the state. The four open-ended questions included on the questionnaire were designed to elicit from the superintendents statements concerning what their schools are currently doing in regard to education in this crucial area, as well as what they feel the needs are for improving approaches. Of the 552 school districts in the state at the time of mailing, 269 questionnaires were returned, these were submitted to a content analysis, whereby the researcher tabulated numbers of responses in certain areas to roughly estimate the frequency of certain ideas. These patterns and trends were indicated: 1) moral aspects of education belong in all aspects of the curriculum; 2) educators in small communities tend to feel the problems of morality are more severe in large cities; 3) moral values should be especially stressed in social studies, English, and home economics classes; 4) teacher must set moral examples; and, 5) teacher training programs must stress moral values as an area of educational concern. (Author/AWW)

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EDUCATION IN

MORAL VALUES

IN MICHIGAN

A REPORT ON A SURVEY
AND DISCUSSION OF IMPLICATIONS
FOR EDUCATORS

SP001585

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EDUCATION IN MORAL VALUES IN MICHIGAN

A Report on a Survey and Discussion
of Implications for Educators

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Foreword

In the fall of 1967, the State Board of Education sent a questionnaire on the subject of education in moral values to all of the school superintendents of the state. The four questions included on the questionnaire were designed to elicit from the superintendents statements concerning what their schools are currently doing in regard to education in this crucial area, as well as what they feel the needs are for improving approaches in this aspect of education. When the returns were compiled, it became apparent that educators throughout the state are very much concerned with this affective area of moral values.

The report on the survey was presented to the Board, and on March 18, 1968, the Board adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education is vitally concerned with all aspects of education and the instructional program in schools; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education believes that the development in each individual of a system of moral values, satisfying to himself and consistent with the interest of his society, is an important goal in education; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education, supported by information provided by citizens as well as by educational administrators and other educators throughout the State, believes that instruction in the area of moral values should be an intrinsic part of the total school curriculum rather than the responsibility of a single part of it; and

WHEREAS, the schools must have as one of their major purposes the instruction of students in the area of critical thinking, so that students may learn to examine thoughtfully the conduct of their own lives as well as the issues that confront society as a whole;

THEREFORE, Be It Resolved That:

> To continue to improve their efforts to foster thoughtful and critical examination of moral values by students and to provide them with the opportunity to practice and demonstrate these values both in the classroom, and in extra-curricular activities of school, and in their everyday life, so that each student can improve the quality of his own life and of society as a whole; and
>
> To particularly emphasize the development of self-respect, respect for others, respect for the law and good citizenship.

In addition, the Board suggested that the report on the survey be published and distributed throughout the state, not only for the benefit of those school people who took part in the survey, but also for the benefit of all persons who are concerned with education in the area of values. This pamphlet contains the report which is presented in two sections: first, a review of the results of the survey itself; and second, a general statement on the question of education in moral values in our schools today.

Ira Polley
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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I
INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL CONCERNS FOR MORAL VALUES

It is not a new thing to be concerned with the role of education in the training of youth in the area of moral values. As long ago as in ancient Greece, Plato considered the moral problems of individual behavior in relation to the social good and decided that very early in a child's life should a beginning be made to train his mind to discriminate between good and harmful pleasures; and Aristotle, appalled by the immoral behavior of Athenian youth, said that the end of education should be above all else the development of an actively good man. Similarily, in the 17th Century, Locke discussed the importance of moral training in schools, to insure that the child will grow into a happy adult of good character who "will be able to contribute to the happiness of society as a whole." And in the 18th Century, Rousseau said that at adolescence a child must begin to develop "moral judgment" in order to discriminate between simple inclination and social duty. Kant, too, was concerned with moral education and said that a child's moral training must be based upon maxims, not discipline; and the great 20th Century American philosopher, John Dewey, who saw individual growth as the great purpose of education, established as the sole criterion for growth its moral value.

What is being very briefly suggested here is that many of the greatest philosophers in the history of Western civilization have been concerned with the problem of the moral values of young people and have attempted to find ways of working out adequate educational schemes in this area of as much critical importance to their societies as it is to ours. But as Kant warned; "Moral education demands the utmost sagacity on the part of parents and teachers."

It is probably true that every age has felt that it must be concerned with the contemporary state of moral values and the moral training of youth, and thus the concern expressed in this area today is not unlike the concern that has been expressed by thoughtful men of any other age. However, there is at least one factor in today's society that perhaps may make concern in the area of moral values particularly acute, and that is the factor of rapid social change. It has become a truism to say that in today's society, change has become so rapid and so constant, that one of the few things we can be sure of is change itself. Discoveries in the realm of science and resulting technological innovation have created a society of constant flux; and although Heracleitus observed even in ancient Greece that all is in continual flux, still, no society has ever experienced such an omnipresent state of change as ours has.

In such a society, stability becomes a difficult attainment; and in the whirlwind of change, traditional values and the codes of morality that our fathers have lived by seem to be as open to change and revision as anything else that is of yesterday. One social commentator has said, in fact, that life in today's society of change is not unlike "life inside a centrifuge," and the speed of change is threatening to take away the very core of meaning from life.

In this kind of society, educators especially find themselves in a quandary. Traditionally an institution responsible for passing on to the young the existing values of society, it is now dealing with young people who continually question all that is traditional; and in fact, teachers themselves, affected by constant social flux, are often perplexed as to what value system and what codes of morality should be passed on to the young.

But even though schools are a part of the entire social fabric

and are as affected by social change as any other social institution, society still looks to the school in the hope that it can provide stability and do more than it has been doing to educate young people in this difficult area of moral values.

The Michigan State Board of Education, aware of public concern and itself anxious to know what is being done in the public schools of Michigan in regard to the moral education of youth, recently proposed to make an attempt to examine, first, the question of what is being done in the state in this area of education; and, second, what educators themselves feel the needs to be.

II
SURVEY BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS CONCERNING MORAL VALUES IN EDUCATION

Specifically, the Board proposed in the fall of 1967 to send a questionnaire to superintendents of all the public school districts in the state to ascertain what their existing programs are in this area and what they feel their needs to be. Four questions were included in the questionnaire, and they are as follows:

1. What is being done presently in your school district in regard to the moral aspects of education, particularly in regard to developing self-respect, respect for others, and respect for citizenship and authority in general?

2. What do you feel are the needs of the schools in your district in regard to this aspect of education?

3. What are the plans being made in your district on the programs being instituted in regard to meeting these needs?

4. What are your recommendations for better meeting these needs in the future?

The return on the questionnaire was substantial: of the 552 school districts in the state at the time of mailing, 269 were returned.

Thus approximately 48 percent of the questionnaires were returned. Further, of the 30 school districts in the state with a student population of over 10,000, all but eight responded, which means that the returns represent the majority of the youngsters attending school in Michigan. Although the questionnaires were sent to school superintendents, they were not necessarily answered by the superintendents themselves. Especially in larger districts, directors in charge of curriculum responded to the survey; and a good many superintendents distributed copies of the questionnaire to a number of principals and teachers in their districts.

An analysis of responses to open-ended questions is, of course, a difficult matter. In this survey, no attempt was made to elicit structured answers, and so the responses were extremely heterogeneous in nature -- and in many cases, very lengthy. Hence, when all of the questionnaires were finally in, they represented a vast amount of diverse data. In order to determine some trends of thought and program patterns, the data were submitted to a content analysis, whereby the researcher tabulated numbers of responses in certain areas in order to at least roughly estimate the frequency of certain ideas; and on the basis of this analysis and also on the basis of a number of careful readings of the responses as a whole, he was able to determine certain trends and patterns in the content. In order to give more of an idea of the general tenor of the responses, quotations that seem to be typical have been extracted and will be presented.

III
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF SURVEY

Expression of General Concern

Perhaps what one becomes most aware of as he reads through the

responses to the questionnaire is the expression of obvious concern. Nearly everyone who reacted to this survey said that we need to be more concerned with the problems of the moral aspects of education. In no case did anyone say that he felt that this was not an important area of education. As one superintendent said,

> The needs for this aspect of education in our district as well as in all of America are paramount if our way of life is to continue. We consider this our number one problem.

And another response:

> Schools must foster, teach, and stress patroitism, citizenship, morality, and respect for the law continually. The turbulent conditions that exist today dictate to us a strong need for strengthening the moral fiber of our youth.

Again and again throughout the questionnaires, one reads these kinds of statements. The needs, say the educators, are urgent; and every administrator and every teacher must be aware of this need and take pains to attempt to provide for it in the curriculum.

There is no question, then, that those taking part in this survey agree that there <u>is</u> a need and that educators must be concerned. Further, almost always the educators say schools should be doing more than they are doing at present. Programs seem to fall short of the need, and schools should find better ways of building the moral aspects of education into all aspects of the curriculum -- those who responded to the questionnaire say.

However, it is not uncommon for the educators in this survey to say that though the needs are great, their schools seem to be meeting them; but without exception, these responses come from superintendents in very small towns. As an example of this kind of response, a schoolman in a

tiny hamlet in the Upper Peninsula says:

> These aspects of our social living can be more easily realized in a smaller community, and we feel we are doing an adequate job in this area. We feel this is one more major advantage of a small school.

An interesting finding, then, is that educators in small communities tend to feel the problems of morality are more severe in large cities. However, in terms of the total number of responses, there are relatively few that indicate satisfaction with present programs. Without question, the majority of districts reporting feel they do have a need to do more in this area then they are doing presently.

Education in Values Part of Total Curriculum

Another finding in this survey is that the educators agree that this aspect of education must be an intrinsic part of the total curriculum, rather than the purview of any one particular curricular area, or of any one particular teacher, or of any one particular grade level. If schools are to have any influence in training for moral values, then a total approach is what is needed. Superintendents of two districts may be taken as representative:

> I cannot see how any school can function and even consider themselves as educating children unless moral values are constantly being stressed in every activity of the school. These things certainly cannot be isolated and taught--they must be practiced in the everyday life of teachers, students, and everyone connected with schools. It seems impossible to begin to list our ways of doing these things, since they must enter into everything we do in schools.

> Within the junior high school curriculum the moral aspects of education are treated as they appear. No specific attempt is made to teach the concept of respect for citizenship as a particular division of any one course. Rather, it is included in the overall program.

There seems to be little question, then, that among the school people in Michigan who took part in this survey there is a strong feeling

that the moral aspects of education should not be a discrete part of the curriculum, but in every aspect of it. Values must be "taught" holistically.

However, even though they say that this aspect of education should be a part of the total curriculum, this does not mean they do not specify certain areas in the curriculum where considerations of moral values should be especially stressed. The curricular area most frequently mentioned is the social studies area, and specifically, civics and government. It is a rare response that does not include some mention of social studies classes. Of this area, a schoolman from one of the largest systems in the state says:

> At various places in our social studies program we attempt to put particular emphasis on respect for citizenship and authority as well as self-respect and respect for others. For example, in grade one we list as a goal to "help the child understand his immediate community: to become a good citizen, develop respect for himself, appreciate the role of family members, and know his place in the school community." These concepts are then reinforced through elementary school and are again specifically referred to in the ninth grade civics and twelfth grade government and family living classes.

Another curriculum area that is very frequently mentioned is home economics, especially since such courses as Home and Family Living usually are offered by this department. Many of those who answered this questionnaire said that their schools offer a course in Home and Family Living, and they felt that this course dealt with many of the moral problems of everyday living -- especially in relation to teenagers.

A third curricular area often mentioned is English--and especially humanities courses. Many mentioned in their answers that in English classes the students read stories that relate to moral issues; and in discussion of these selections, students get into questions of morality. For example:

> Perhaps the question of morality is most intensively discussed in English. In the study of literature the student delves into

> the problems of morality by analyzing what he is reading and interpreting it into his own life. The student comes to understand himself better through the ideas of other people.

Other curricular areas were not mentioned extensively. Occasionally, however, someone would mention science classes--usually in relation to sex education. The lack of mention of science classes as an appropriate place to discuss morality seems to be a rather curious gap, since some of the most crucial moral and ethical questions facing us today have a definite relationship to the role of science in our society; but apparently if these issues are raised in science classes, administrators are not particularly aware of it. One superintendent from a very small town in northern Michigan, however, expressed an almost Huxley-like view of science education:

> Perhaps, in teaching of science, the classroom can help pupils to envision that we live in a world of "cause and effect" and that from the inner workings of the atom to the infinities of the solar system, our universe is governed by regulation, rhythm, order, and laws. If these concepts are really taught to and understood by the pupil, it seems to me that we will have gone a long way toward leading the pupil to seeing the importance of himself in terms of a framework that includes everything in the society of our times.

Extra-curricular activities are, as one might expect, very frequently mentioned. Such activities as taking part in clubs are discussed as good places for students to develop self-confidence; self-respect, which in turn leads to respect for others. The general feeling seems to be that clubs provide "real living" in miniature; and in such settings, young people find opportunities to work out questions of moral values in "real life" situations. A typical response in this area is:

> Students, in their various classes, clubs and organizations define for each other what morality prevails in their day-to-day relationships.

Another extra-curricular activity very often mentioned is sports. Sometimes the educators mentioned gym classes, but most often they specify organized sports programs. Of the various extra-curricular activities open to students, the sports programs are by far the most frequently mentioned. One such comment is:

> Through the school's athletic program our coaches constantly stress sportsmanship and fair play during practice and during game competition. Special accent is placed on respecting game officials; boys will make it a point to commend a game official on his officiating. When our teams travel to other schools they have been counseled beforehand on neat grooming and dress; and when they are in restaurants and public places to conduct themselves as gentlemen. Student spectators through our student council, pep meetings and assemblies are given counsel as to proper conduct at athletic contests. All this instruction is aimed toward developing self-respect and respect for others.

Another area within the general domain of curriculum very frequently mentioned is the subject of patriotism. Particularly in regard to the education of elementary school youngsters, there is a great deal indication that educators feel that more stress should be placed on respect for the American flag, and that patriotic assemblies should be held more often. Again and again throughout these responses, one finds emphasis on the importance of encouraging patriotism in developing stronger moral values.

Assemblies at which principals or some invited speaker talk about the importance of moral behavior are mentioned with considerable frequency; and, in fact, many say that one large part of their attempts to educate youngsters in this area is by means of special assemblies.

Another area that appears in this survey is religion; although considering the relationship in our society between morality and religion, perhaps it is surprising to find this issue not more omnipresent than it is.

The educators very often say that schools need the support of churches in regard to this area of education; but other than this kind of reference, it seems to be assumed that religious programs indeed do not belong in public school programs. Typical comments from several different administrators are as follows:

> Our schools are open after school hours for Bible instruction on a voluntary basis. Gideon Bibles are passed out each year in our elementary fifth grades.
>
> We have the Rural Bible Mission talk with us twice a month which is a reinforcement of respect, authority, and citizenship.
>
> Although we do not teach religion, a moment of silence is observed after the pledge of allegiance to the flag, and before the children are allowed to eat their lunches, in respect for those who do wish to offer a silent prayer.

There are some who feel that the absence of religion in school is a real handicap to educators, if they want to have some effect on student morality.

> History has shown us time and again what happens to nations when they turn from the Truths of the Scriptures. The Supreme Court decision on Bible reading and Attorney General Kelley's opinion certainly is a step backward in regard to strengthening the moral fiber of our state and nation.

But this kind of comment, though not absent, is not frequently found either.

Very typically in the responses one finds that the educators in general favor broadening the curriculum in all aspects. Apparently they seem to feel that if schools can offer more kinds of courses to students and increase the number of school experiences open to them, more opportunities will be afforded to improve the moral aspects of their education. For example, the educators often mention more citizenship

classes, more club offerings, more classes in sex education, and greater use of materials that will stimulate interest in questions of morality. In fact, one might say that all the things that educators talk about in regard to curriculum improvement are included in these questionnaires as means of more effectively dealing with this aspect of education.

Importance of the Teacher and Other Staff Members

As has been shown, the educators in this survey feel that education in the area of moral values can best be accomplished through a total approach, and one means of accomplishing a total approach is through the general curriculum, as well as through extra-curricular activities. But even more vital to the total approach is the teacher himself. Again and again, those who responded to the questionnaire say that if the students' moral values and behavior patterns are to be affected by their public school education, then the teacher must set the example. Precepts will not do; teachers must demonstrate in their daily lives, these educators stress, the standards of behavior we expect from youth. And if the right teachers are employed by the schools, then the problems of education in this area will be resolved. Following are quotations from two different superintendents' statements:

> There is no one book written that can be used in the school to teach children how to become better citizens. The qualities mentioned are being taught by teachers and administrators through the medium of association. A teacher that is a strong upstanding person will radiate her qualities to her students.

> It is my honest belief that the professional staff of any given school by its attitude and conduct will by example teach more morality than by any other means. A fine professional staff whose individuals respect themselves will have the respect of others including the children. This respect is contagious and children in a classroom are quick to perceive these characteristics. It can never be, "Do as I say, but not as I do." It must be a continuous process of example from kindergarten through the completion of high school. Some of our teachers are still old fashioned enough to believe that they have

the responsibility of teaching by example.

In their discussions of the importance of the teacher, the school people do not go into great detail about what, specifically, they mean by a teacher who will set a good example of moral behavior; but there is no doubt that they themselves have very definite opinions of the kind of person who can best do this--and in the case of the superintendents and principals, they try to seek them out and employ them on their staffs.

Those in this survey did, however, express some very definite ideas on the subject of how more teachers might be trained to do a better job of affecting their students in the area of moral values. First, a number of the responses indicated that part of the responsibility rests with the teacher-training programs at the college and university level. If teachers are to stress this area, then during their college years their professors must show them that this is an area of educational concern; and, further, prospective teachers must be shown ways of working with students in regard to morality. Implicit in these comments is a criticism of teacher-training institutions for their apparent neglect of this area. For example, a principal says:

> If we want good moral training in the schools, we are going to have to see to it that our teachers all have high moral standards. Our colleges are going to have to set high moral standards before they certify a teacher as well as the scholastic standards they are upholding.

"More in-service training" is a phrase that appears throughout these questionnaires. Too often teachers are not aware of the problems in this area, say the educators; or even if they are aware, they may not know what to do. Hence the need for more in-service training. Some of the following are quotations from three different superintendents:

> A qualified resource person from a university education department should meet with all teachers either during the first week of school in the fall or at an in-service workshop during the school term to deal specifically with the issues of self-respect, respect for others, respect

for citizenship, and respect for authority.

> Local administrators need to continue to work with their respective staffs on how to encourage freedom of thought and speech in their students and how to constructively direct these freedoms.
>
> The Multi-Ethnic Curriculum Committee meets every two weeks to discuss methods and study materials designed to promote within the schools a better understanding of the many groups and backgrounds that make up the student population of the district.

A good many principals and superintendents who responded to this questionnaire feel that the "current militancy of teachers" has had a detrimental effect on students. "How can youngsters have respect for their teachers nowadays," these administrators very commonly say, "when teachers are threatening to strike and are actually going on strikes?" As one superintendent says, there is:

> a growing tendency for members of our society to obey only those laws, rules, codes with which they are in agreement. Tragic is the only word that can be applied to teachers who violate the "no strike" provision of P.A. 379, amended in 1965. How can we expect students to obey the laws when their teachers don't?

Besides teachers, another group that is very frequently mentioned are school counselors. Better counselors and more counselors are obviously felt to be important if schools are to do a better job in the area of moral values. Many students have trouble establishing feelings of self-respect; and students who have little self-respect--say the Michigan educators--cannot have respect for others, which, in turn, leads to asocial (immoral) behavior. Well-trained counselors are in a position to deal with youngsters whose self-respect is low; and through intensive counseling services, improvement can be effected in this area and, thus, in the child's entire moral outlook.

Closely related to this is the problem of the especially difficult

child. Very often the educators mention that special facilities are needed for the few students who disrupt classroom activities and "spoil it for everyone". If such children could have better counseling available to them, or if more special classes and special schools could be made available for these youngsters, the entire school scene would be greatly improved--say many of the Michigan schoolmen. As one principal in the Greater Detroit area comments:

> Special facilities are needed to educate the "way-out" student. Our society tends to tolerate too much nonsence from a few people with problems.

"Respect" as a Part of Education

Throughout these responses the word "respect" appears continually; and the term is used in relation to three areas: respect for self, respect for others, and respect for authority; and of these three, those who took part in this survey are most concerned with developing in students more of a respect for authority. Over and over again throughout these questionnaires there is overwhelming evidence that the educators feel that students do not have enough respect for authority and that schools must go to much greater pains to stress the idea that they must learn to respect authority on all levels--the authority of rules and regulations in school, the authority of laws, the authority of adult figures, etc. And the best way to teach students that they must learn to have respect for authority is to make it clear to young people that infraction of the rules and disobedience of authority figures will not be tolerated. In other words, students must learn that they cannot "get away with it." This calls for firmness from teachers, who, in turn, must be supported by administrators, school boards, parents, and all other social institutions. There is no question, then, that those who answered these questions, at least, feel that in order for schools to do a

better job in the moral aspects of education, they must show students that they must respect authority. The following comments from administrators in systems both large and small perhaps will illustrate the kinds of responses that were typical:

> My foremost recommendation is a very simple one. Since the days of Progressive Education we have become more permissive in dealing with adolescents with the result that we now have widespread crime and disrespect for authority.
>
> There is much emphasis now on the rights of the individual. This is fine. But, it seems that with this new emphasis there is general disregard by the individual as to his responsibilities to his peers and society.
>
> Too often both police and school authorities are limited in the problems of delinquents where more stern measures might be real effective. I suspect I am saying that our total society, including education, needs to place more emphasis on law and order as a step toward improved citizenship.
>
> Our school needs to consistently enforce the rules to show the students and the parents that authority is important. It is hard on everyone when some enforce the rules while others don't.
>
> Closer superivision in halls. More pressure on chronic absentees. Enforcement of regulations.
>
> All persons involved in the training of youth must take a stand on "law and order." We take a licking from the authorities, whom we feel are too liberal. We must remain firm.
>
> Educate the parent to understand that his child wants discipline and he needs to see that he is disciplined.
>
> If morality, respect for authority, etc., can be taught, a concerted drive must be undertaken to offset this general breakdown in respect for law and order, rules of society, and anyone in a position of authority.

Commonly mentioned as a means of teaching youngsters more of a respect for authority is to have police officers come into the schools and talk to the students. Sometimes police officers are brought in for

assemblies, sometimes for class units, and sometimes whole courses are built around the concept of the importance of authority in our lives. In these courses, local police departments are involved throughout the course. To take a single typical example:

> We also have a State Police trooper and a member of the county Sheriff Department come in and explain to the students what their job is as we believe that this helps the students have more respect for the law and authority in general if they have had a direct contact with a law officer on a friendly basis.

Society's Role in Developing Values in Young People

In attempting to do an effective job in educating youngsters in moral values, school people feel that not only must this be a total approach within the schools themselves, but they must receive a great deal of support outside of the school. "We cannot do it alone" is a feeling that permeates these questionnaires from start to finish. One superintendent's comment is very typical:

> The greatest need in the aspect of moral education in our school district would seem to be the total involvement of school and community. Cooperation is necessary by all agencies, which would include families, in order to solve any moral problems.

Parents, as one might expect, are mentioned over and over again in this survey as being extremely vital to this aspect of a young person's education. The educators say that parents must be less permissive, they must support the school's stand in this area, they must take part in school affairs more than they do, they should be offered "parent education" courses, they must cooperate more with the schools in all areas, they should spend more time with their children--in short, they should be better parents and cooperate more with the schools. Teachers see their students but a small portion of their lives; it is the parents who must be the most influential figures.

Parents appear everywhere in the pages of these questionnaires. Other social institutions must support the school too. Courts for example, should be more stringent, although a good many of the educators in this survey say that courts are prohibited from being as effective as they might because of the law's tendency to emphasize the rights of people, rather than their responsibilities.

Another element that is very frequently called upon to support the schools in their desire to educate youth in the area of moral values is mass media. The following responses are not at all atypical in this survey:

> We need to clean up the movies, T.V., magazines, and newspapers, they seem to thrive on sex and crime. To them everything has to be sensational. Making another dollar seems to be the most important thing to these people. The start has to come from this direction. Why not publicize the good that people are doing in the world today. Murder, rape, demonstrations, hippies, etc. have taken the spotlight.

It is clear, then, that to those who responded to this questionnaire, the problem of the moral aspects of education is a whole social problem, not the problem of the school alone. Schools, being a part of the whole society, cannot work alone against that society; and if society believes that youth must be better educated in this area of morality, then all institutions within that society must take part in the effort. "More cooperation between school and community" is a phrase that appears again and again. Schools are microcosms of society; they fail in the same ways that society fails and can succeed only where society succeeds.

Suggested Approaches

One of the questions asks the school people what their plans are for programs in this area. It is fairly apparent as one goes through these questionnaires that the educators are better prepared to describe needs in

this area in general than they are to describe specifically what they plan to do. A large number of educators say that they have no specific plans, and many mention that they plan to continue with their present activities. They plan to "do better," "work harder," and "become more aware." But other than suggesting general curriculum improvement, there are relatively few specific plans mentioned.

Since the Michigan State Board of Education issued the questionnaire, one might expect that many of those who responded would say they would like "more support from the state"--and, indeed, this was the case. In general, requests were for more leadership from the state, more consultant service, state guidelines in this area, more in-service training institutes, and more financial support. The following are some typical responses from six different administrators whose comments can be taken to be representative:

> I do not feel the State Department of Education is doing nearly enough in this extremely important aspect of Education. Specifically, attractive materials could be made available to local schools. The State Board of Education is to be particularly complimented on this interest and inquiry--I hope there is some follow up and through on this project.
>
> We feel that perhaps, the State Department of Education might develop and provide schools with a reference and resource list.
>
> Guidelines from the State Department of Education on the moral aspects of education would be appreciated.
>
> It would be helpful if the State Board of Education adopted a resolution requesting all schools to give a specific place to moral and spiritual values in the curriculum.
>
> The State Department of Education should request an annual report of how the objective of encouraging the development of moral and spiritual values is being met by the school districts.
>
> I would recommend that a standardized text be set up by the state. Also that this course be a required subject for graduation.

As one reads through these questionnaires, it becomes apparent that there is relatively little stress placed by the educators on an exploratory approach to the question of moral values. There is a great deal said about general curriculum improvement, and adults setting better examples, and more support needed from society, and a need for more emphasis on authority, but there is a dearth of answers that suggest approaching the problems of education in the area of morality from the standpoint of inquiry.

For example, it would seem evident that in this area teachers should perhaps be less concerned about imposing authority on students and more concerned with an investigation of the question of morality itself. There seems to be an assumption in these responses that we know what is moral and that the whole question of right and wrong and moral behavior has been answered once and for all. What is necessary now is for teachers and society to teach students the answers. But perhaps what is more needed in education in this area today is not moral instruction, but an effort to show students how to examine, to investigate, to question, and to appraise moral values. If we are certain that our moral values are sound, then we need not fear their being submitted to this kind of cognitive, critical treatment. As one educator who believes in an inquiry approach to the "teaching" of moral values says:

> The needs of the schools in this district in regard to this aspect of education are not so much to devise a common code of morality and impose it on one and all as they are to examine various codes of morality, together with their end results. It seems to us that one of the problems with morality questions these days is not that we lack moral fibre so much as we must understand what it is that we say we believe. An imposed morality which seems to have been imposed on those that could do nothing about it but accept it for the time being has resulted in the shaking of all foundations. This is not to say that many of the elements of the imposed morality were not valid; it is to say that

> the morality was imposed without explanation and seems to have applied only to those who would have been troublesome without it. In this school district (and I suspect in all school districts) it is time to examine why we believe what we believe.

And another educator, also thinking of an "inquiry" approach to this area, says:

> Any education based on developing self-respect, respect for others, or respect for citizenship and authority is likely to be on a "dictated" level, i.e., students are not led by an inquiry approach or direct participation to see the value of such items. Their training comes from the moral precepts stated by the home or by the school, and are not derived through the students' own thought processes.

A superintendent from one of Michigan's larger districts says too that emphasis should be placed on exploration in this aspect of education:

> Many of our teaching methods result in the student leaving school with an assortment of labels and facts which he is unable to relate and bring to bear upon real social problems. He has never really had the opportunity in the classroom to become involved in a way that will enable him to probe into the underlying philosophy and assumptions of the democratic way of life; consequently, what he has learned in school appears to have little relevance to reality. We need to involve our students at the secondary level; we need to explore more deeply with them the need for: responsibility, law, respect for authority, citizenship, respect for the rights of others and the role of ethics in a democratic society.

The examination approach is seen in the following replies also:

> The greatest need in our district, as in other districts, is to continue seeking more effective ways of working with the growing number of children in our society who are reacting in various negative ways to established institutions. In part, this effort must be aimed at the development of the individual student's image of himself and his relationships in school and society. In perhaps a more important part, it seems to imply that we must examine carefully the relevancy of the established order, and established institutions to the needs of modern youth and modern society.

And an educator from a small town in the northern part of the state believes that if we are to do more in the area of moral values, we must show students

how to think deeply and critically about all pressing social issues:

> To become a mature, enlightened, and a socially responsible adult in modern American society, youth has to learn about work, war, race, sex, money, faith, power, love, hate, the role of science, and how the past flows into the future. Youth is too often not given the freedom of inquiry that is urgent and vital. We hesitate to expose them to their social responsibilities in a world of expanding populations, technological evolution, and even of unprecedented leisure. Our youth must be taught to think deeply and clearly.

Another educator brings up the question of whose moral codes do we teach?

> The first question schools must answer is "whose moral standards?" In any community, we could find citizens who subscribe to a definition of morality anywhere from fundamentalist beliefs to Hugh Hefner's playboy philosophy. We will find people who believe in Abraham Lincoln's philosophy of walking across town to return a penny, and people who feel that any means will justify the end.

It has been shown that the educators often mentioned the importance of extra-curricular activities, because in these activities students have an opportunity to take part in "real life" situations and in these situations learn the importance of moral behavior. A few of the people who responded to the questionnaire extended this idea by saying that schools should make a greater effort to create more "real life" situations within its entire curriculum so that students may work out through their own experiences standards of moral behavior. In this sense, behavior patterns and codes of behavior are not imposed on students; but in democratic school settings students will learn that certain ways of behaving are indeed more socially constructive than others and are not only good for the whole society, but for the individual himself. The following quotations show this point of view:

> It seems to me that the school program must more efficiently approximate life situations so that value and morality judgments can be made in settings which pose questions of morality far less artificially than

> we do now. Students must have the opportunities of being faced with real issues and real problems rather than contrived situations. Learning by doing is essential in this area, and we must first concede that human beings at any age have the ability and the right to make mistakes in order to make self-correction.
>
> Recommendations for better meeting these needs in the future revolve around finding <u>real</u> problems for children to solve or help solve. Real problems encompass work with community leaders and city officials on neighborhood development, school plant planning, recreation program development, etc. The in-school and out-of-school time children spend in democratically solving problems will directly result in developing self-respect, respect for others, and respect for the citizenship and authority in general.

Other educators in this survey stressed the idea that if schools are to do a better job in the area of moral values, then they must do more to encourage human understanding. This is slightly different from the very common "teach students to respect others." Those who mentioned human understanding seemed to be concerned that students should be able to empathize with others and to learn why others behave in the way they do. For example, the curriculum director in a large system says:

> The causal Approach method simply stated means "seeing things from the viewpoint of others." In social studies for example, children learn not just <u>what</u> people do, but <u>why</u>? To understand people, boys and girls must gain insight into why people adopted or developed customs they follow, why they engage in the activities they do, and what the way in which they order their lives means to them.

Frequently, mention is made of the importance of studying the rights of minority groups, and efforts are being made to study the civil rights issue. For example, one school person discusses what his system has been doing to improve instructional materials in this area:

> The school district will make a concentrated effort to improve the programs of inter-group and human relations. A professor from Michigan State University has completed the instruction of thirty elementary teachers regarding recognizing the contribution of

minority groups through instructional materials. An additional thirty teachers will be instructed by the professor later in this school year.

And:

The school district is also involved in carrying out an organized plan of educational programs of intergroup and human relations. All principals are required to develop and implement a plan.

IV
CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The world that presents itself to our youth today may not be a brave one nor even a new one; but in many ways, it is strikingly different from the world of their parents. In fact, the world has changed so radically in the last several decades that someone has commented that 1924 was a thousand years ago. And in such a world of flux and continual social upheaval, where generations are separated by divisions of thought perhaps more sharply than at any other time in our history, youth find themselves estranged, out of place, adrift in a world dominated, as Riesman says, by the faceless city and imperturable machine.

Indeed, so many of the values that are of the past are being questioned in this modern, technological society, that in his depressed moments modern man--and particularly the youth of today--may experience the same moods of hopelessness and dumb despair that Camus evokes in his testament of existentialism, The Stranger. As Rollo May has said, modern human beings feel they have lost not only their sense of community, but even their sense of self.

But in many respects, while youth do seem to be alienated and appear to be pursuing reckless and self-indulgent lives without thought of moral values, from another point of view there are those who see modern youth as more concerned about values and in many ways more socially

conscious than ever before. Such observers as C. P. Snow, for example, have noted that there are signs today of the development of something very rare in the world up to now, which might be called "moral kindness"; and Norman Cousins has said too that there is "an emerging moral force" in the world, which is becoming increasingly audible, especially through the voices of youth. Others have observed the same phenomenon among the youth of today. The Peace Corps and the Civil Rights movement demonstrate the ethic of social service among our young people today on a broad scale; and Nevitt Sanford, writing in Daedalus, says that more than ever before young people want to be educators and social reformers and "to nourish their humanity and that of others." As Time succinctly put it, youth aren't singing "I wanna hold your hand" as much today as "I wanna change the world."

In short, then, even though the pessimist may feel despair about the nihilism shown by modern youth and their lack of respect for traditional moral values, from another point of view there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that while the young of today may repudiate many values, they are also in search of them.

If youth are in search of moral values that will have meaning for them, and if they wish to engage in meaningful social actions, schools must help them in finding ideals by which their lives can become more meaningful and values by which intelligent moral and ethical decisions can be made. Schools must be concerned about such matters, for, as Peter Drucker said in a Harper's article, education for tomorrow must deal not primarily with economic matters, but with basic values--moral, aesthetic, and philosophical. But unfortunately efforts in this direction seem almost to be slackening in our schools under the current pressure of a "back to the fundamentals" movement. We must say, then, that if youth of today want to act upon the ancient

Apostolic word, "Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds," then the schools need to do more than they are doing to help youth in this process. Nearly every great philosopher--Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Locke, Rousseau, and Dewey, to name just a few--has directed the schools to perform this function.

But how can this purpose be effected in the schools? How can schools go about assuming this responsibility? The question is answered no more easily today than in the past, although perhaps considering the vast powers now at man's disposal, it is more imperative than ever before that he find answers. From the results of this survey some philosophical guidelines emerge.

First, there seems to be no question that if schools are to help students reach moral and ethical understandings about their lives, a total effort is needed. A search for values cannot be the purview of one unit, one class, one grade, or one teacher. Such a search must be a search for Truth; and this is what all education--on every level and in all of its aspects--must be about. Moral and ethical considerations are implicit in all the academic disciplines. Certainly no study of literature, history, or the social sciences can be meaningfully discussed without considering their moral and ethical implications. And science too, both from a standpoint of its effect on the ecology of the natural and the human worlds and from a standpoint of the ethics and morality of its uses--should be considered from a point of values, as well as in its "pure" form.

John Gardner, in his discussion of excellence, has said that men of integrity, by their very existence, rekindle the belief that we can live above the level of moral squalor; and there seems to be no question that the educators who took part in this survey believe that in order for

schools to do an adequate job in the area of values, the teacher must represent to his students a model of integrity. Students may discuss moral values and consider them in the strictly cognitive realm--and even verbalize them well; but perhaps only through a role model--that is, through the human demonstration of ethical excellence--can we expect young people to internalize positive value systems. It would, of course, be unrealistic to say that all teachers must be of the heroic mold, to represent the hero figures that Commanger says inspires us to respond passionately to the moral crisis of our time, or to be the ideal "type speciman" described by Abraham Maslow, a humanistic "growth" psychologist; such prototypes of moral and ethical excellence are rare. However, it remains true that if schools are to be effective in influencing the development of positive values in their students, then the teachers themselves must be concerned with ethical and moral values, demonstrate them in their own development, and lead students to a knowledge of always better models. Teilhard deChardin, the brilliant Catholic theologian, devoted his life to developing the idea of the continuing evolution of man--in spiritual and moral dimensions. Students must have models before them in their moral development who, like deChardin, believe deeply in the continuing evolution of the human race.

In order for young people to develop an internalized and rationally-derived value system and to "try out" their beliefs in "real" situations, it is necessary that schools present to students "real life" situations. Textbooks that present a Pollyanna, romanticized view of the world; history books that hide the controversial issues of our past away in historical closets and present instead a kind of Pablum history; discussions of governmental and social problems that simplify to the point of distortion and avoid current crucial issues; materials that picture the world to students as

comfortably white and middle-class--these prohibit reality in education and create in the minds of students the not uncommon impression that the school is one world--an artifically contrived one--and the real world is out there, away from the classroom. Schools must be places where students find opportunity to live out democracy and to have real encounters with issues that are directly relevant to their lives, so that the moral values that they are in the process of developing can be tried out in terms of immediate experience.

E. H. Erickson has said in an essay in The Humanist Frame that the "roots of virtue" go back to infancy, where a child learns the meaning of hope; and if any infant does not learn to hope, as many in harsh and forbidding homes do not, he lapses into a lifeless state, and the seed of virtue is destroyed at the start. Indeed, a great deal of research has shown the tremendous power of early learning and its resistance to later alteration and extinction. To educators concerned with the development of students' moral values, this is a discouraging fact. It is a truism that it is difficult, if not impossible, for schools to "work against" the home. As the educators in this survey make abundantly clear again and again, if the homes do not succeed--if parents do not plant the "seeds of virtue"--can the schools be very effective in the moral aspect of education? Nevertheless, educators must have faith in the possibility that schools - in spite of the odds that may work against them - can have a significant effect on the development of moral values in children and youth.

And not only do the home environments sometimes work in opposition to what we might consider to be positive social values, but other social institutions often do the same. In the present survey, one

of the social forces frequently mentioned is mass media. In motion pictures and television shows, in countless numbers of paperback books and magazines, and in much of the daily press, young people find violence attractively on display; and even a large share of our most important literary works are filled--says literary critic Joseph Wood Krutch--with violence, perversion, and nihilism that seems to be rooted in contempt for the world. In such a milieu, it is difficult for young persons to develop positive moral and ethical values.

Basic to moral values is respect--and this is brought out throughout the survey. Respect can be viewed on three levels. It begins with self-respect; and if a child has a positive image of himself and if his self-concept is on the affirmative side, only then can he respect someone else--just as Erich Fromm says in The Art of Loving that before one can truly love another, he must first love himself. And from self-respecting individuals who also have respect for their fellow man may evolve a society in which no man need fear his neighbor, and no man need fear himself, as Anne Roe puts it. "It is a world society," she says, "which welcomes any number of cultural subdivisons, and counts them all of value. And such an ideal world is based on the moral character of individuals."

Throughout the questionnaire, the educators discuss another kind of respect--respect for authority; and it must be agreed that if society is to function as a unit, there must indeed be respect for authority. However, it is essential here to differentiate between authority--which is often necessary--and authoritarianism--which is always pernicious. But there are several kinds of authority; and before one can insist on "respect for authority," he must first examine the authority itself, for as Fromm points out, one needs only to value authority that is rational and based on competence

and knowledge. The Nuremberg trials made clear that unquestioning respect for authority has terrible dangers of its own. Thus, it seems essential in a democratic society that authority be respected--yes; but that authority, regardless of its form, must remain open to question and to possible change.

Closely related is the problem of responsibility and freedom. A frequent claim is that youth of today are more concerned with their individual desires than their responsibilities to society; and if existentialism can indeed be taken as the philosophy of our times, as some say it is--with its extreme emphasis on the vaulting importance of the self, then perhaps it can be said that there is truth to the assertation that youth are more concerned with their own hedonistic desires than the social good. Gratification of one's own desires to the detriment of the social good is a basic problem in a consideration of moral values, as it has been for as long as man has lived together in social groups. In the Gorgias Plato presents the problem fairly and puts into the mouth of Callias as strong an argument for immorality as any immoralist has ever given; but Callias must be argued down through logic and rationality, for the continuation of the society depends upon it. Further, in America there is a strong strain of "rugged individualism," which, though not the same thing as hedonism, may be in some ways just as socially destructive. This is the point that Allan Nevins makes in an essay on individualism, in which he says that in an era demanding cooperation and social mindedness, the traditional concept of rugged individualism must be open to question. Thus, another aspect of the question of moral values is the balance that must be attained between individual fulfillment and social responsibility.

Perhaps above all, what must be said here is that education in the area of moral values must be approached through inquiry--by means

illustrated by several of the superintendents' statements in this survey. Socrates, concerned as he was for the morality of youth, believed that moral education must be based upon reason rather than custom and should be subject to criticism and evaluation. This should be done, he said, in terms of the ever-expanding freedom of morally autonomous but cooperating persons--who together make up a community whose aim is to organically grow in depth, breadth, and intensity of experience. In other words, as John Gardner has said in Self-Renewal, all elements of our society must remain vigorous and effective through a process of renewal; and to educators concerned with moral values, this should mean that students be led to examine the questions of morality, to discuss morals in terms of evolving social conditions, and to search for rational and socially worthwhile alternatives to those elements of moral codes that they may criticize. Buckminster Fuller has said that "total man may be going through a total wave of transformation into an entirely new relationship with the universe"; and he is only one of the many who see that a new image of man may be emerging and that to stay in harmony with the evolutionary development of moral man, education must be a facilitator of change.

Sidney Hook, the eminent philosopher, has pointed out that contrary to popular belief, philosophy is not a content of ideas, but "a mode of thought which analyzes our presuppositions and assumptions in every field of action and thought." A philosopher, in other words, is not concerned with the development of a philosophy so much as he is in studying the process of arriving at a logical and consistent set of beliefs. In the same way, "moral education" does not seek to impose "morality" on students, and a teacher who is concerned with "education for moral values" does not attempt to pass on to youngsters his own belief system. As the

British philosopher, R. S. Peters, has put it, a teacher has no right to use his special relationship in which he stands to children to parade his own idosyncratic opinions. "His concern should not be to convert children to adopt his beliefs because of their admiration for him, but to get them to see the reasons on which such beliefs are based, for his job is teaching, not indoctrination."

What a teacher needs to do is seek to interest youngsters in the need for moral considerations and to show them how to judge their own affairs and the affairs of men in terms of moral values. This separates the moralist from the moral educators. This survey has revealed the need for "moral education"--that youngsters do need to learn how to make moral judgments concerning their own behavior and the behavior of social institutions generally. To moralize and to impose morality on youngsters--especially in a pluralistic society--is not within the purview of public education. But to show young people the value of moral inquiry most distinctly is, since in a democratic society, one of the purposes of the public school--if not the purpose--is to educate for the betterment of the social whole.